

Building on solid foundations

The potential for social participation and
procurement in South Australia



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Australian Industrial Transformation Institute

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procurement in South Australia**

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The Stretton Centre & The Stretton Fellowship

The Stretton Centre is a regional innovation centre located in Adelaide's North. The Centre is playing a pivotal role in transforming the economic and industrial landscape in the region to counter the ill-effects of the local manufacturing decline (City of Playford, n.d.). Specifically, the role and focus of the Stretton Centre is to (Stretton Centre, 2015):

- Provide a focal point for the development of regional economic, industry and employment strategies.
- Identify and pursue new industry and workforce development opportunities.
- Assist with the development of industry networks, clusters and new facilities that support growth.
- Foster innovation in high growth potential sectors.
- Provide a world-class collaborative space for building and sustaining economic development partnerships.
- Involve stakeholders from industry, government, researchers and the wider community.
- Provide high-level industry extension services in collaboration with international partners.
- Create close partnerships with local, South Australian and Australian Governments.
- Maximise industry and employment development opportunities that can flow from major projects.
- Foster the uptake of smart procurement practices in the region.

The Stretton Centre and Housing SA have a shared interest in maximizing local industry and employment opportunities that flow from investments in social housing building and maintenance programs. Housing SA has funded the Stretton Fellowship to address related challenges and pursue opportunities through research, collaboration and innovation.

Key tasks for Part 1 of the Stretton Fellowship includes: a) examining best practice for maximising local public housing activities and associated employment and training opportunities; b) undertaking a cohort analysis of Trust tenant data to determine suitable groups for engagement; and c) developing a monitoring and evaluation framework for the Participation Initiative.

Executive Summary

Governments around the world are seeking to leverage the local industry and employment generation potential of public procurement. South Australia has been a leader in this field through the introduction of legislation and policy requiring contractors to work with government to maximise local employment and industry participation in the delivery of publicly funded projects. This culminated in the establishment of the Office of the Industry Participation Advocate, a role that is seeking to increase the economic and social benefit to the State of public procurement through policy and program interventions. The focus of this report is on how public procurement undertaken by the South Australian Housing Trust (SAHT) and Housing SA might be leveraged for the benefit of Trust tenants through the creation of employment and training opportunities linked to this procurement.

The successful design and implementation of a program that is capable of maximising employment opportunities from procurement for Trust tenants, could help to significantly increase the labour market participation and wellbeing of tenants. According to the Productivity Commission's *Housing Assistance and Employment in Australia* report, at 30 June 2013 just 20% of South Australian public housing tenants were employed compared with 71% of the overall working-age population. Research has also shown that public housing tenants are more likely to be employed in vulnerable sectors of the South Australian economy like automotive manufacturing, increasing their risk of unemployment (Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute, 2006).

The Stretton Centre and Housing SA have identified a shared interest in maximizing local industry and employment opportunities that flow from investments in social housing building and maintenance programs. The Stretton Centre is a regional innovation centre located in Adelaide's North with a specific focus on developing and supporting regional economic, industry and employment strategies in response to the manufacturing downturn. Housing SA has funded the Stretton Fellowship through the Stretton Centre to explore local employment challenges and potential for developing a coordinated approach for engaging SAHT tenants in training and employment opportunities in the region. Of particular interest is maximising the potential of housing and construction investment in this context, supported by smart procurement policies and practices.

This research paper is a product of the Stretton Fellowship and explores the potential of social housing as a driver of innovation and jobs in South Australia. Recognising that the vast majority of Housing Trust tenants are not engaged in the workforce but have significant potential to participate to a greater extent in their communities, Housing SA Participation Initiative has been introduced. The model involves engaging local participation brokers to provide direct client services including the brokering of participation opportunities and linking local services to generate positive outcomes for participants. Participation outcomes include volunteering, learning and/or earning. In particular, the initiative aims to secure opportunities through social procurement mechanisms. In this context, we are examining the feasibility of connecting Housing Trust tenants to training and employment opportunities in the construction and maintenance functions of social housing.

The wider policy context in which this participation and procurement project fits spans policy surrounding structural adjustment, welfare reform, employment and participation, along with housing and urban development. Relevant Commonwealth and State initiatives include:

- The Commonwealth Industry Growth Fund: \$155 million commitment to the development of new industries in high growth sectors

- SA Government Our Jobs Plan: \$60 million over four years to aid the transition away from local car manufacturing
- South Australian Department of State Development (DSD) Automotive Transformation Taskforce which provides services to help affected individuals and businesses transition into the new economy.

Policies at State and Commonwealth level to address unemployment and disadvantage:

- The McClure Report (2015) targeting planned reform of the welfare sector.
- *South Australia's Strategic Plan* which includes a focus on supporting disadvantaged people to engage in study, education and workforce development and training, particularly through the provision of innovative, stable and affordable housing.
- *South Australia's Economic Plan* which includes as a priority the economic revival in Adelaide's North to mitigate the impact of the Holden factory closure in 2017.
- *South Australia's Look North Economic Plan* has a focus on leveraging employment related advantage for disadvantaged communities through job promotion, community building and providing disadvantaged individuals with work training/skill development and getting them into jobs.
- SA Department for Communities and Social Inclusion (DCSI) *Thriving Communities* service area involves building opportunities for communities, recognising the social, environmental and economic factors that limit opportunities for some people in particular.
- *Together SA* (a non-government organisation) leads *Together in the North*, a collective impact project bringing stakeholders together to produce policy, systems and service change for the well-being of children and young people in the northern suburbs. Potential is identified to evolve a collective impact initiative to secure employment opportunities for highly disadvantaged groups in the North, using SAHT tenants as a case in point.
- DCSI *Northern Connections* connects the various programs targeted to the North and coordinates services that need to work together. It has a strategic interest in addressing the 'deep and persistent disadvantage' entrenched in the North by building community capacity and strength.
- *Northern Futures* (a non-government organisation) fosters collaborative partnerships for the benefit of the people in northern Adelaide, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds and provides services to support workforce development, employment programs and career development.

Relevant housing policies include the following:

- The *SA Housing Strategy* calls for direct government investment that gives priority to the most vulnerable in the community and is delivered to achieve higher levels of social and economic participation. It further encourages partnering to deliver innovative ways to support low income South Australians.
- South Australia's Planning Strategy projects a requirement for at least 38,700 additional affordable homes in greater Adelaide and 7,000 new affordable homes in non-metropolitan areas over 30 years, generating employment opportunities for local disadvantaged residents.
- The *Housing SA Blueprint* defines the agency's contemporary role as facilitating and coordinating *housing provision* across a range of public housing domains; *service provision* encompassing homelessness support, private rental and the access system, and *supporting systems* across business areas.



- *Renewal SA* is now the single agency responsible for renewing the suburbs built by the SAHT. *Renewal SA* has a long-term 15-year strategy to renew up to 40,000 SAHT dwellings. They have estimated that:
 - The *Renewing Our Streets and Suburbs Program* will generate more than \$1.2 billion of private and government investment, supporting around 1600 jobs each year over five years.
 - As part of the *Renewing Our Streets and Suburbs Program*, the *1000 Homes in 1000 Days Program* will generate around 900 new employment opportunities for South Australians.
 - There is potential to build on *Renewal SA's* commitment to improving outcomes for SAHT tenants by involving SAHT tenants in the development process.

The role of procurement in stimulating local economies and producing direct benefits for local communities and residents – particularly in terms of addressing local unemployment - has been explored in a number of settings. Relevant research, policy and examples include:

- Deloitte Access Economics research has shown that employment and investment and the use of local suppliers both in direct employment and through sub-contractors are key to promoting local economic development (2014). South Australian Government procurement spending contributes to broader economic benefits including progressing a range of socio-economic objectives such as addressing disadvantage.
- The *South Australian Industry Participation Policy (IPP)* seeks to promote government expenditure that results in economic development for South Australia and supports strategically important industries within the state.
- The *South Australian State and Local Government Capital Expenditure and Procurement Project* factors in local employment outcomes when allocating tenders for the Northern Connector and other key State Government-funded projects across northern Adelaide. The project is also seeking to establish a local procurement policy for the collective capital expenditure budgets of the Salisbury, Playford and Port Adelaide Enfield councils.
- *Playford Alive* is part of *Renewal SA's* Works Program and includes a key objective of ensuring that local people prosper from the economic development and economic growth that it provides.
- Housing NSW spends around \$270 million each year on public housing property maintenance contracts (around 600,000 work orders) and has specific and mandatory (legislated) social obligations related to public housing estates, particularly in relation to tenant employment.
- Some Victorian Councils are extending their social procurement processes to include local employment, which involves employing long-term unemployed people into the Council workforce, typically in partnership with external organisations (not-for-profits) that support the employment process.
- The Victorian government *Public Tenant Employment Program (PTEP)* assists contractors to comply with the social clauses in their contracts by providing recruitment services, including sourcing tenant recruits, and ensuring that all the relevant checks and qualifying certifications have been undertaken.

The Housing SA Participation Initiative project has key points of intersection with the full range of policy directions and initiatives outlined in this review. In targeting SAHT tenants for a program designed to increase participation outcomes in volunteering, learning and earning activities, it responds to a wider policy program targeted at reducing unemployment, building stronger, more resilient communities, and developing confidence and job-readiness among a population group with otherwise low employment prospects.

Public procurement can play a key role in advancing social and economic objectives. Public investment in housing and urban development can be leveraged to foster innovation and generate local employment and training opportunities for people experiencing disadvantage and unemployment. There is also potential to extend this into other growth industries in the north such as the Health Care and Social Assistance industry. To ensure that people who have experienced disadvantage are able to take advantage of opportunities to enter (or re-enter) the workforce it is important they are provided appropriate individualised support. This should acknowledge the 'cost' of working (particularly in casual roles) which may impact the new worker in unanticipated ways. In addition, government has a role in continuing to support new workers during the transition period as they learn to manage the challenges associated with working.

The Participation Initiative project has key synergies with other like-minded projects such as the Housing SA-ART Employment Garden Blitz project and Victorian Public Tenant Employment Program, which use wrap-around approaches to supporting personal development, workforce readiness and skills training and supported and coordinated pathways into employment for more complex, disadvantaged members of the community. However, what is lacking in this context is a solid evidence base about how initiatives that seek to connect public housing tenants with construction and maintenance-related employment in the sector work, and to what effect.



1 Introduction

Creating socially productive work opportunities for people who are unemployed or underemployed can have far-reaching benefits for individuals, households and communities. Employment provides income to support individuals and their families, it provides a sense of purpose and self-worth, improves health and wellbeing and it increases a nation's productivity. A review of the welfare system commissioned by the Australian Government in 2013 identified that:

There are many benefits of work. Most people gain health benefits associated with employment, both physical and mental. Work can be a vital part of recovery for people with mental health conditions. Intergenerational benefits of work accrue as children who grow up in employed households have better social, emotional, physical development and learning outcomes. The community also benefits. Increased employment supports economic growth, minimises the cost of income support payments and increases the amount of tax paid. (McClure, Sinclair, & Aird, 2015, p.10)

Improving labour market outcomes for public housing tenants through strategies linked to public procurement is the focus of this report. It examines the potential of social procurement as a driver of innovation and jobs in South Australia with a focus on maximizing local industry and employment opportunities in northern Adelaide flowing from investments in social housing building and maintenance programs.

Timely and well-directed investments in housing and construction projects have the potential to generate business and employment opportunities relatively quickly. Investments of this type normally have significant multiplier effects, generating positive flow-on impacts throughout regional economies. The challenge is to maximise these benefits through measures that seek to leverage local industry participation and employment from public investment in physical infrastructure and maintenance.

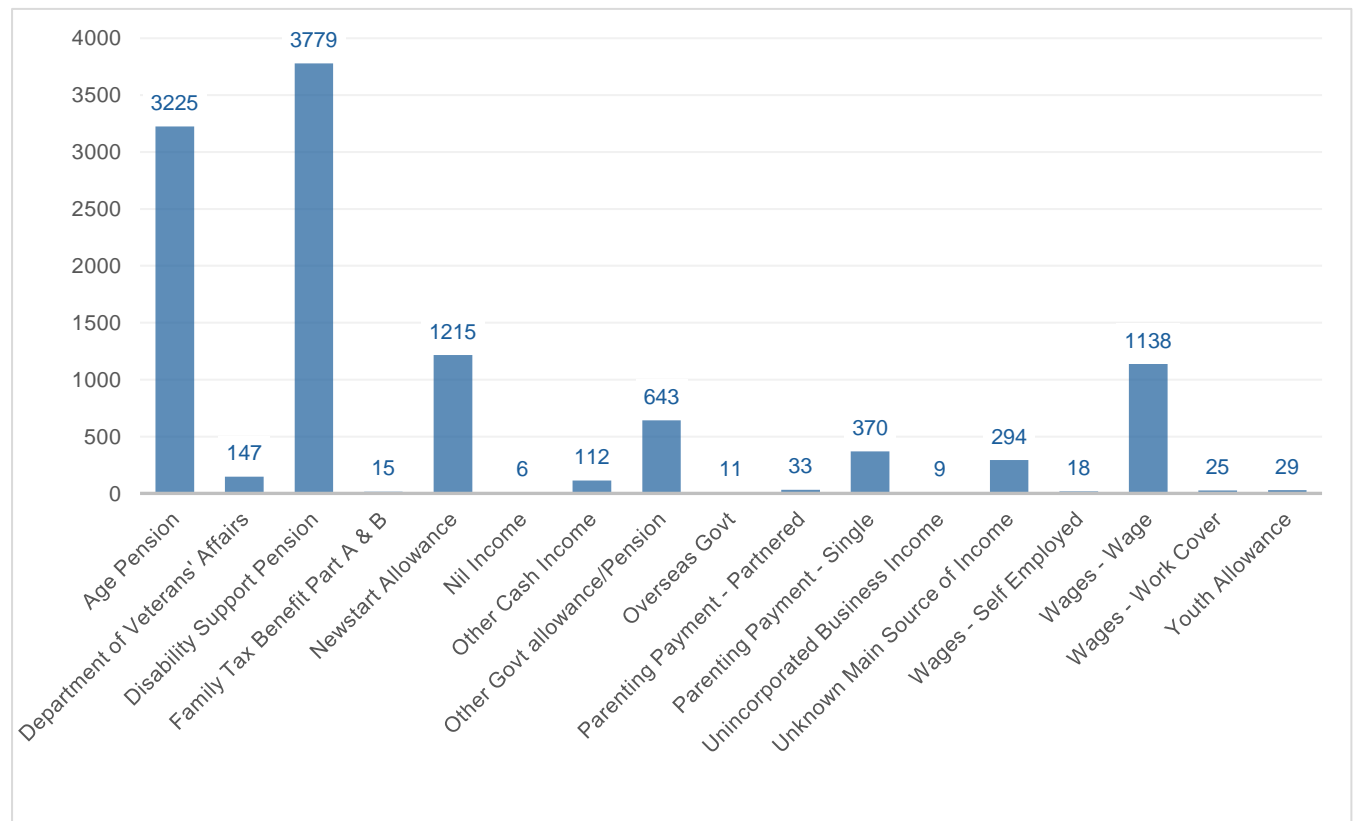
There is considerable international interest in how public investments in housing can form part of an effective local employment strategy. This 'social compact' orientation promotes and enables economic growth while ensuring its benefits do not bypass those with most to gain from local revitalisation processes, namely those local residents who experience higher levels of disadvantage. There are numerous examples in the United States of the implementation of 'first source hiring' practices, whereby explicit measures have been taken to ensure low-income residents are able to take advantage of emerging real estate development job opportunities in their local districts (Wolf-Powers, Reiss, & Stix, 2006).

Alongside this broader housing development focus, there is also a growing interest in local industry and employment opportunities flowing from investments in social housing building and maintenance programs. Our research is interested in reorienting the focus from creating broader employment opportunities in the neighbourhood toward creating greater employment opportunities for local disadvantaged residents and more specifically using Housing SA and Renewal SA social procurement for the benefit of public housing residents.

According to the Productivity Commission's (2015) *Housing Assistance and Employment in Australia* report, at 30 June 2013 around 20% of South Australian public housing tenants were employed compared with 71% of the overall working-age population. Notably, 28% of tenants who were housed *before* 2000 were employed compared with 16% of tenants who were housed *in or after* the year 2000, which was when needs-based allocations were introduced. However, this is considerably higher than recent local data that shows only 10% of SAHT tenants or

partners reported wages (or unincorporated business income) as their *main*¹ source of income (see Figure 1). Compared with the general population, public housing tenants were more likely to be female, Indigenous, Australian-born, from single-person households and to have a disability (Productivity Commission, 2015). This signals a clear and pressing need for strategies to build opportunity and support the entry of SAHT tenants into gainful employment.

Figure 1: Housing SA main source of income (tenant/partner), SA 30 June 2016



Source: Housing SA Tenant data (personal communication, 2016)

1.1 Housing SA Participation Initiative

Recognising that the great majority of SAHT tenants are not engaged in the workforce although many are believed to have significant potential to participate to a greater extent in their communities, Housing SA has introduced the Housing SA Participation Initiative. The initiative has three aims:

- To build community capacity;
- To strengthen the local service system through enhanced relationships and collaboration;
- To provide practical assistance to tenants by brokering participation outcomes.

Local participation brokers have been engaged to 'provide direct client services in brokering participation opportunities and linking local services to generate positive outcomes for participants'. Participation outcomes focus on volunteering, learning and/or earning. In particular,

¹ We acknowledge another source of income may be primary, which would indicate a low wage.

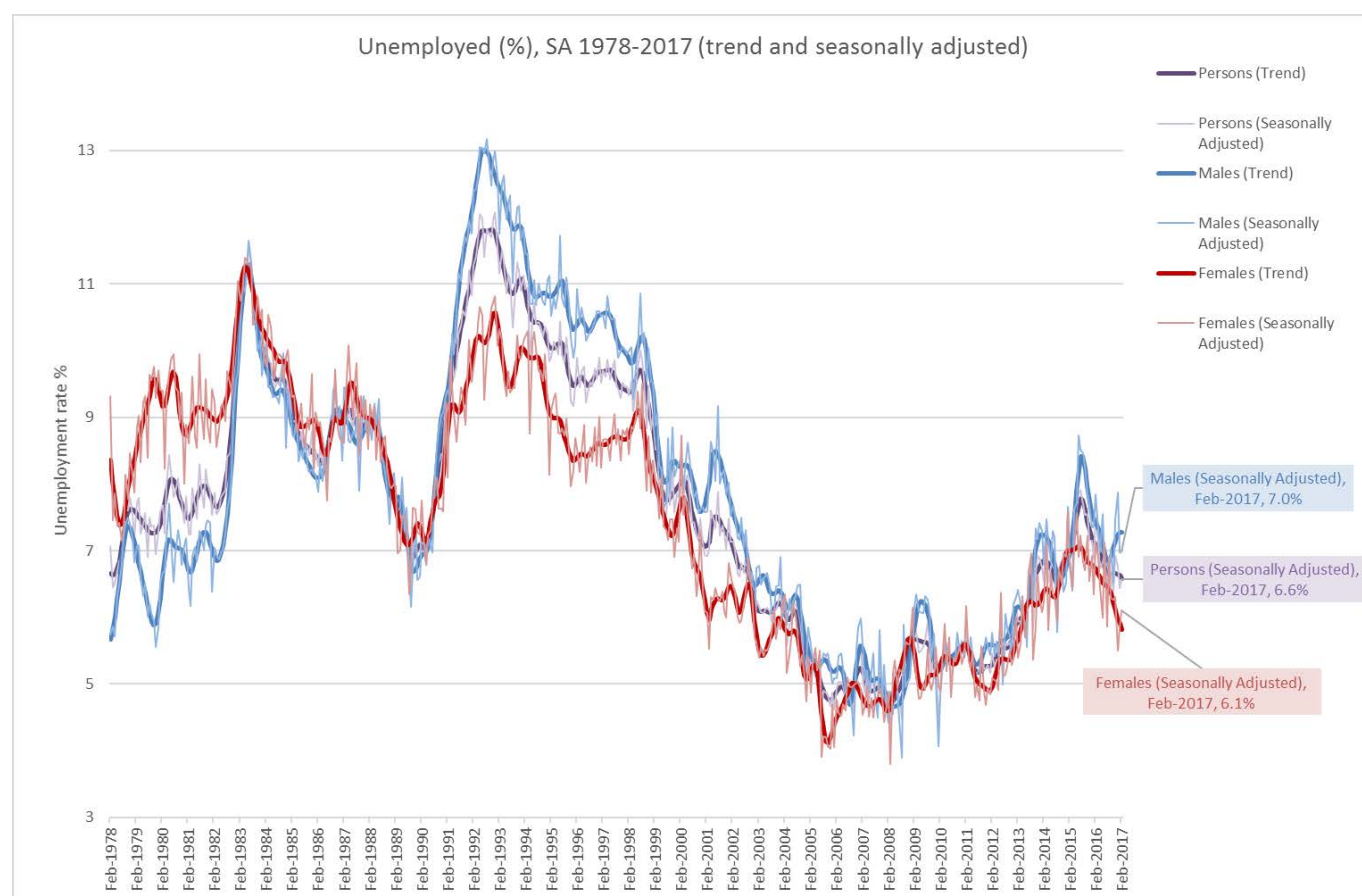


the initiative plans to secure opportunities through social procurement mechanisms. The Local Participation Broker (LPB) model involves: targeting and engaging potential clients (primarily SAHT tenants or occupants) and establishing networks and relationships with key partner agencies and service providers; undertaking client-directed work-readiness activities; supporting clients to access services and supports; linking the client to participation opportunities while continuing to provide the necessary supports; and tracking outcomes. The LPB Model involves extensive liaison with the client, significant people in their lives, the supports and services they use and other key stakeholders, with a view to producing valuable, achievable and sustainable participation outcomes.

2 The employment imperative in Adelaide's North

South Australia has experienced a significant slowing of the economy and employment growth in recent years. Unemployment has trended upward for a number of years peaking mid-2015 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2017). Since this time, the unemployment rate has declined to a low of 6.6% (seasonally adjusted) in February 2017. Much of this decline relates to female unemployment rates – which have dropped to 6.1% compared to males at 7.0%. Nationally, the South Australian unemployment rate is just below Queensland (6.7% seasonally adjusted). However, the unemployment rate for South Australian males (7.0%) remains the lowest in the country.

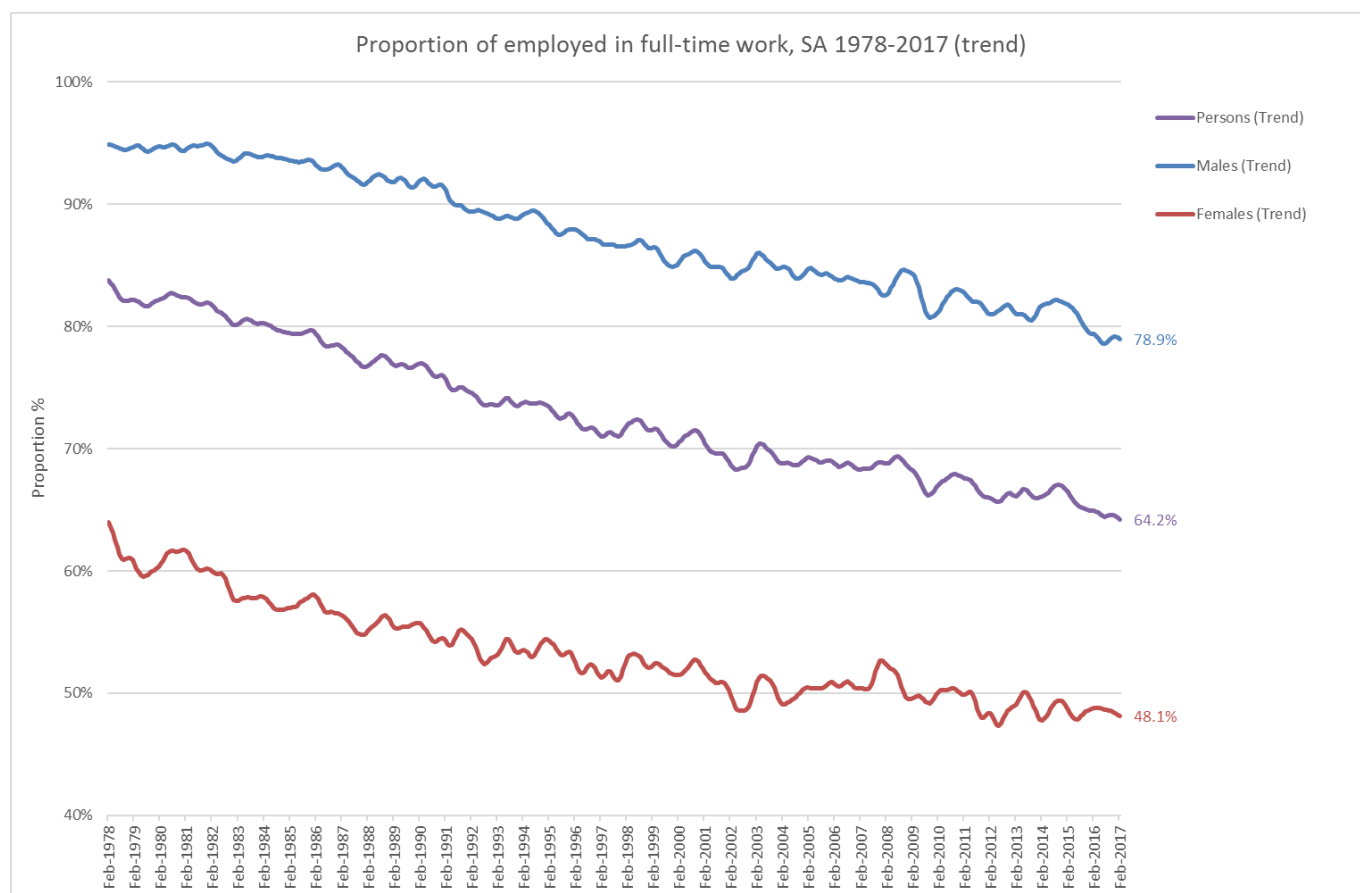
Figure 2: Proportion of persons, males and females unemployed, SA 1978-2017



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (2017)

In this context it is worth considering the proportion of employed persons in full-time occupations. In South Australia, we have felt the impact of an estimated 20,000 manufacturing jobs² lost since the global financial crisis (GFC), with this continuing to fuel the loss of full-time positions. During this time, the proportion of the South Australian workforce in full-time employment declined from around 69% to 64% continuing the downward trend evident in Figure 3 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2017).

Figure 3: Proportion of persons, males and females employed in full-time work (trend), SA 1978-2017



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (2017)

The GFC has exposed existing vulnerabilities, particularly in relation to mass manufacturing which has been subject to intense competitive pressures from a high Australian dollar and subdued global and domestic demand. The rise of low cost mass manufacturing in Asia has also undermined the competitiveness of significant manufacturing operations in South Australia and elsewhere, with immense implications for local economies and employment.

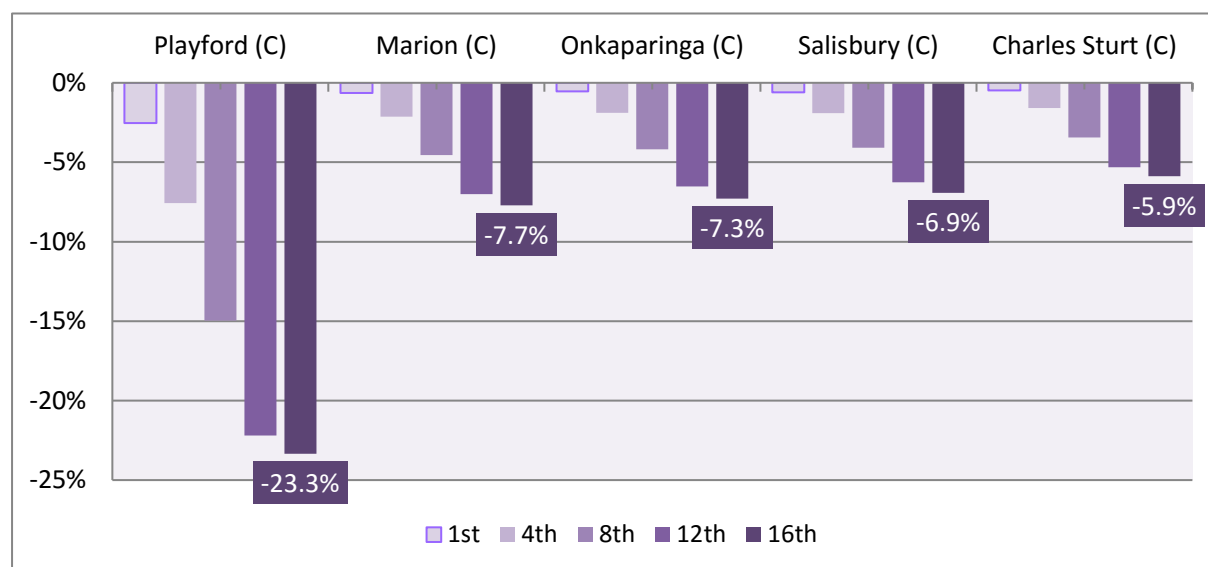
² We note that there has been a recent increase in manufacturing jobs in South Australia, however, much of this related to part-time employment.



South Australia's Economic Statement 2015 points to the decline of industries that have traditionally supported the state, signalled most recently by the closures of Holden, Alinta Energy's Leigh Creek Mine and Port Augusta's coal-fired power station. South Australia's economic environment is currently defined by rapid change and marked uncertainty; moreover, it has shouldered a disproportionate burden in terms of slower employment growth and a sharper rise in unemployment compared with national figures (Government of South Australia, 2015a).

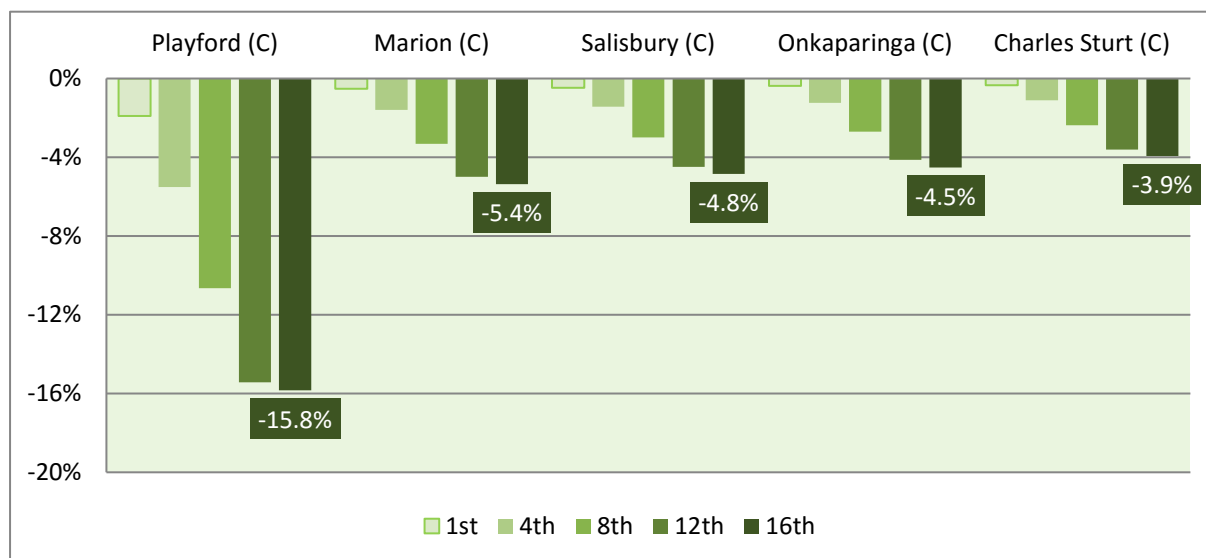
Job losses associated with structural change are often concentrated in particular geographic locations (Dolamore, 2013). Spoehr and Shanahan (1994) noted that regions with a high dependency on mass manufacturing are particularly vulnerable to large-scale downsizing and firm closures. This is increasingly evident in South Australia as the local government areas most likely to be affected by automotive closure in South Australia include Playford, Marion, Onkaparinga, Salisbury and Charles Sturt. Modelling undertaken of the impact on the Playford region signalled a projected decline across sixteen quarters of almost a quarter of its Gross Regional Product (GRP; see Figure 4), a loss of 16% of the jobs in the LGA equating to around 4,400 local jobs (workers employed within the region; see Figure 5:), and a loss of 7% of jobs occupied by residents (workers living within the region; see Figure 6). While losses of this magnitude are not expected given successful efforts to help offset these losses, it is expected that a significant number of people in the northern and southern suburbs of Adelaide are at risk of unemployment and underemployment.

Figure 4: Projected % change in Gross Regional Product after Holden closure



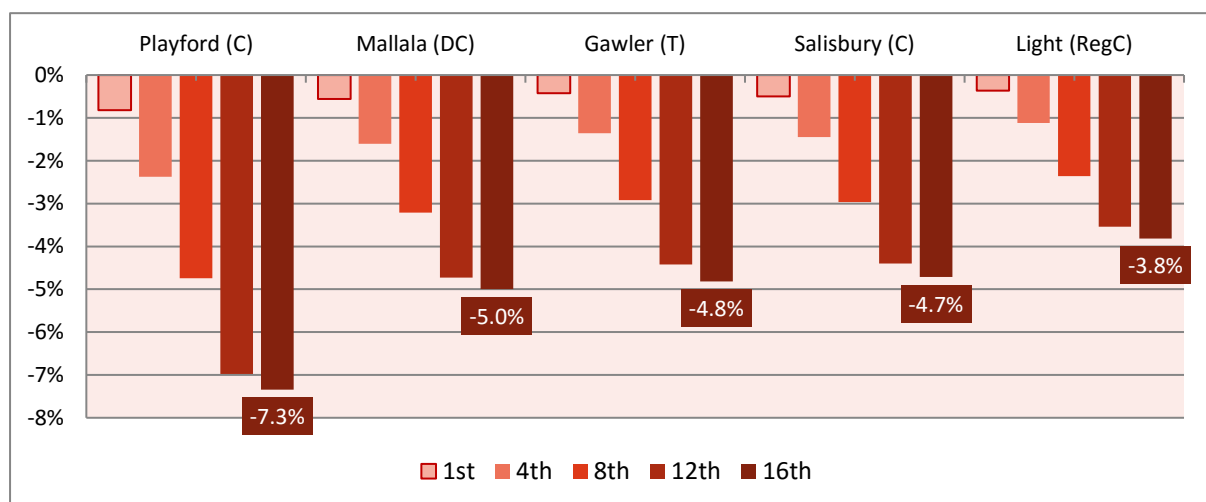
Data source: National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (2014)

Figure 5: Projected % change in employment in LGA (place of work) after Holden closure



Data source: National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (2014)

Figure 6: Projected % change in LGA resident's employment (place of residence) after Holden closure



Data source: National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (2014)

People at greatest risk in times of economic transition tend to be those with the fewest resources. During periods of economic decline, those experiencing retrenchment are much more likely to become long-term unemployed (unemployed for 12 months or more), noting that factors such as age, gender, educational qualifications, cultural background and financial circumstances play a role in shaping outcomes for retrenched workers:

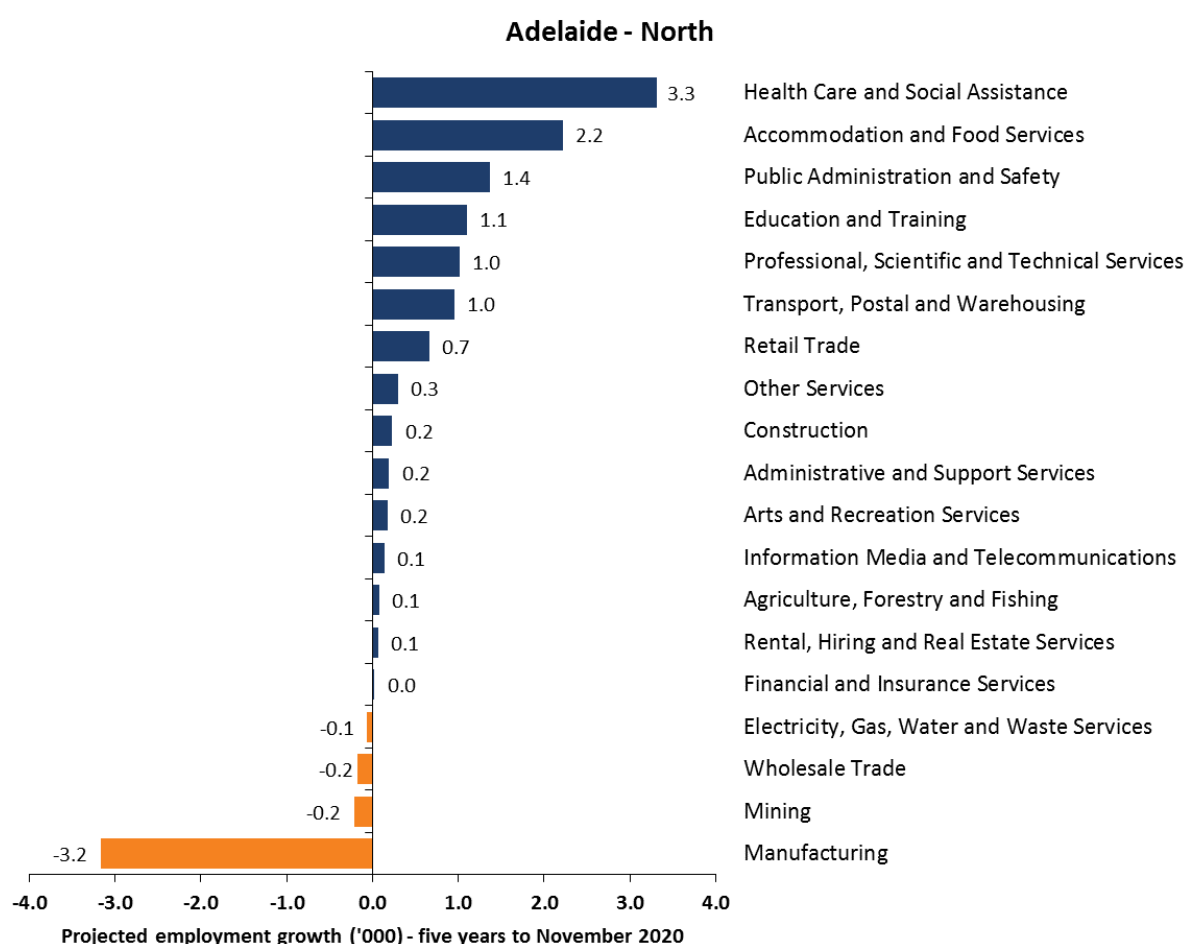
Workers displaced as part of major firm closures or retrenchments often experience poor labour market outcomes for extended periods of time. These negative effects are not felt uniformly; although some level of hardship is the typical experience, particular groups tend to struggle more than others. The effect of a mass-layoff extends beyond the individuals who lose their jobs and is felt keenly in communities that are reliant on one or two industries (Nous, cited in Spoehr, 2013, pp17-18).



A recent population profile of the City of Playford showed that at the 2011 Census it was rated the most disadvantaged LGA in the Greater Adelaide area and one of the most disadvantaged urban areas in Australia, albeit with some variation. Within the LGA, Elizabeth, Smithfield – Elizabeth North and Davoren Park were ranked the second to fourth most disadvantaged areas in the state (following the APY Lands which were ranked as most disadvantaged). One Tree Hill is the exception within Playford, ranking as one of the least disadvantaged areas (and in the top six percent in South Australia) (Hordacre, Spoehr, Crossman, & Barbaro, 2013). On the whole, however, the loss of the automotive industry in a region already marked by key socio-economic disadvantage presents a particular scale of challenge for local leaders and policy makers to engineer an economic and social recovery that can produce real benefits for the local community.

Looking forward, employment projections for Adelaide North indicate that the health care and social assistance and accommodation and food services industries are expected to experience most job growth in the five years to November 2020 (see Figure 7). Overall, employment in the Adelaide - North region is projected to increase by 11,800 jobs in the growth industries, whilst declining by 3,600 across four industries (principally in manufacturing) resulting in a net gain of 8,200 jobs in Adelaide – North to a projected total 201,700 jobs in the region in November 2020.

Figure 7: Projected employment growth in Adelaide - North by industry, November 2015 to November 2020



Source: Department of Employment (2016).

While the current focus is on exploring potential employment opportunities for SAHT tenants through the maintenance and building programs of Housing SA and Renewal SA, there is notable scope to explore similar opportunities in other growth sectors in the north. More than ten percent positive growth is projected in the five years to 2020 for accommodation and food services (14.9%), health care and social assistance (12.4%) and professional, scientific and technical services (10.4%; see Table 1). More than ten percent negative growth is projected for manufacturing (-16.2%) and mining (-12.8%), with the latter representing the smallest workforce in the region and only accounting for a loss of around 200 jobs. We note that much of the job losses relate to male dominated industries where full-time jobs are common. Whereas job growth appears in industries conventionally filled by a casualised female workforce.

Table 1: Projected five year employment growth to November 2020, Adelaide - North

	Nov-15	Nov-20	Projected employment growth	
	Trend	Projection	'000	%
Manufacturing	19.5	16.4	-3.2	-16.2%
Mining	1.7	1.5	-0.2	-12.8%
Wholesale Trade	5.9	5.7	-0.2	-3.0%
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	2.5	2.5	-0.1	-2.4%
Financial and Insurance Services	4.6	4.6	0.0	0.6%
Construction	15.8	16.0	0.2	1.5%
Administrative and Support Services	7.5	7.7	0.2	2.6%
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	2.8	2.9	0.1	2.8%
Retail Trade	22.7	23.3	0.7	2.9%
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	2.1	2.2	0.1	3.0%
Other Services	8.3	8.6	0.3	3.6%
Information Media and Telecommunications	2.8	2.9	0.1	5.0%
Arts and Recreation Services	2.2	2.4	0.2	7.9%
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	11.2	12.2	1.0	8.5%
Education and Training	11.7	12.8	1.1	9.4%
Public Administration and Safety	13.9	15.3	1.4	9.8%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	9.8	10.8	1.0	10.4%
Health Care and Social Assistance	26.7	30.0	3.3	12.4%
Accommodation and Food Services	14.9	17.1	2.2	14.9%
Total (All Industries)	193.5	201.7	8.2	4.2%

Source: Department of Employment (2016).

3 Employment opportunities for SAHT tenants

Research has historically shown that public housing tenants who are employed are most likely to be working in manufacturing industry (Groenhart, 2014). According to the Australian Housing and Research Institute (2006, p. 5) -

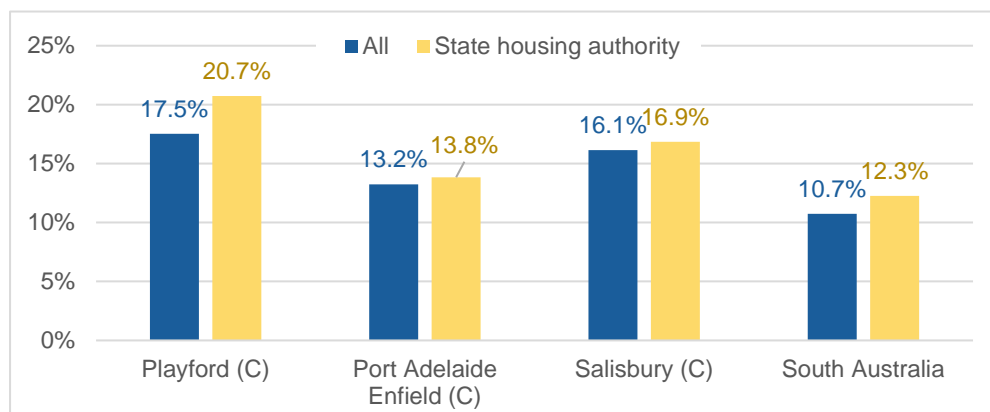
Figures from the 2001 Census, for Victoria, show that 23% of public housing tenants located in Neighbourhood Renewal areas were employed in the manufacturing industry compared with 15% for Victoria overall. Manufacturing is, however, an 'old' industry. The explosion in the requirement for IT skills, generally across all industries, has created a 'digital divide' between those that have these skills and those that do not. Working age public tenants are less likely to have access to a computer at home (37%) and access to the internet (19%) than other income support recipients (65% and 60% respectively) and are therefore less likely to have developed these 'new' skills.

Despite the recent downturn in manufacturing across Australia we found similar results in 2011 to those presented above from 2001 in that Playford, a target for



urban renewal, had demonstrably higher rates of employed residents working in the manufacturing industry. However, employed persons renting from the SAHT were almost 20% more likely to be working in manufacturing than the South Australian population as a whole (see Figure 8). Hence the downturn in manufacturing in Adelaide's North³ is likely to hit hard among the already disadvantaged working age SAHT population.

Figure 8: Proportion employed in manufacturing for those renting from State Housing authority compared with state, selected LGAs, 2011



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (2011)

The relationship between public housing and employment has been well researched (Groenhart, 2014; Hulse, Jacobs, Arthurson, & Spinney, 2010). As previously identified, the employment rate of working age public housing tenants is significantly lower than the general population, likely due to the targeting of public housing to those most in need who are also least likely to have key job skills. A combination of factors play a contributing role including certain disincentives to work (i.e. rents set as a proportion of income, so if income rises so does rent), the location of public housing in areas of concentrated disadvantage, allocation policies that contribute to placement of people in areas of high unemployment, poor access to transport, high rates of social exclusion, limited family and social networks, and inter-generational unemployment (Productivity Commission, 2015).

The pressing need to consider people on the margin of the labour force and the role they have to play in future employment in South Australia has been noted (Keating, 2008; SA Centre for Economic Studies, 2008). Drawing the long-term unemployed back into the labour force is key to advancing positive economic, social and personal outcomes.

There are a number of common features shared by programs that have successfully returned the long-term unemployed to work (Keating, 2008). These include:

- Measuring and rewarding employment outcomes;
- Targeting training for specific occupations, jobs or industries;
- Designing training and employment programs to meet skill vacancies;
- Including a focus on motivation and confidence building;
- Fostering partnerships between employers, industry, labour market providers and others;
- Providing 'step-up' options to support transition back to work;
- Including mentoring and support.

³ Data for November 2016 presents manufacturing as now contributing only 11.0% of Adelaide North employment (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016)

Enabling people who are long-term unemployed to make successful transitions into the labour force is key to advancing positive economic, social and personal outcomes.

Research has shown that intensive support is required both prior to and immediately after the transitioning of highly disadvantaged and longer term unemployed SAHT tenants into employment settings. It is important to achieve collaboration between local employment providers and community education agencies, an outcome that is facilitated by employment and learning coordinators who can foster and develop the necessary partnerships. There is also a need to address structural factors, for example allocation policies (allowing SAHT tenants to move for work), childcare provisions, removing income barriers (e.g. piloting new rent setting policies in areas of high unemployment) (Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute, 2006).

Efforts to reconnect complex-case unemployed people back to the labour force have been applied in a variety of contexts. Return to Work SA (RTWSA) has recently implemented a ReSkilling Pilot which involves a personalised approach to skill maintenance, re-training and outplacement with the aim of improving the quality of return to work outcomes for people injured at work who cannot return to their pre-injury job and/or pre-injury employer. Four key service areas have been identified which can be used flexibly - in combination or alone as suits each worker:

- Skill maintenance and development;
- Skill assessment, recognition and mapping;
- Training;
- Employment outplacement and recruitment support.

Strategic case management and early referral is a key feature of the ReSkilling model, drawing on successes of other jurisdictions. This involves proactive management of high risk and complex files using capable staff with manageable caseloads, improved face to face contact with key stakeholders, and targeted and purposeful referral to return to work service providers. Of particular relevance is the introduction of mobile case managers, with around 100 of these providing face-to-face support to injured workers and employers around the state.

Another example is the work of ART Employment which operates in Adelaide's North (Moretti & Spoehr, 2014). ART Employment specialises in brokerage between training and employment services (Indigenous and non-Indigenous) and assisting in the development of programs designed to equip Aboriginal clients with requisite skills and capabilities to work in recruiting industries. Rather than 'training for training's sake', the organisational principle is to 'work backwards' by identifying industry opportunities and what specific employers are looking for in their employees, examining what RTOs have to offer, and working with RTOs so they can better respond to these local demands – within an Aboriginal employment context. ART Employment works on the premise that employers are looking for more than job-specific



skills, with 'employability' (also characterised as 'job readiness' capabilities) rating as a key requirement. Hence there is a focus on wrap around services to develop capabilities across both specific skill sets and employability attributes for Aboriginal job-seekers.

ART Employment has hosted a number of successful training to work transition projects in northern Adelaide. The Garden Blitz project aimed to up-skill Aboriginal jobseekers while delivering benefits for Aboriginal Housing SA tenants in the Elizabeth region. The program was led by a partnership between Housing SA, ART Employment and DSD. The City of Playford played an instrumental role in project administration. Partnerships were established with a number of training providers and with Job Services Australia services – in particular Workskil, Boystown, and Job Prospects.

The idea for the Garden Blitz project grew out of previous work undertaken by ART Employment, which was contracted by the SA Aboriginal Elders and Community Care Services Inc. to provide garden maintenance for 60 properties with Aboriginal residents. Noting a widespread problem of poorly maintained yards in Aboriginal communities, ART Employment approached Housing SA and DSD about developing a landscaping program that involved recruiting, training and supporting Aboriginal job seekers. Funding was sourced from Skills For All for training in Cert II Horticulture, with payment contingent on participants achieving the certificate.

The project was based on the provision of a 'whole of person' suite of services, which is understood as essential for successful entry into and retention in the workforce of many Aboriginal people. ART Employment actively recruited participants and provided them with an induction; accredited training in Cert II Horticulture was delivered, and health checks were undertaken by Muna Paiendi Community Health Service.

The first Garden Blitz activity commenced in October 2012, and proved so successful that a second round was organised. Of the 17 participants registered in the pilot round, 12 achieved Statements of Attainment and/or Statements of Attendance, one gained employment on a major project (e.g. Adelaide Oval redevelopment), three were on referral to jobs and awaiting interview outcomes; one was being supported to transition to a TAFE Mining Certificate course, and one had started their own business. The second round produced 17 registrations, with nine of these achieving Statements of Attainment and/or Statements of Attendance, five gaining employment, one enrolling in a further Cert II course at Taoundi College, and one being referred to a Primo Meats Employment Program.

In addition to direct participant outcomes, reactions from Housing SA, the property tenant, and neighbours of the properties were very positive. Local feedback indicated increased neighbourhood harmony and acceptance of Aboriginal residents, stemming from the environmental improvements brought about by the project.

4 The policy context for northern Adelaide

The South Australian Government has identified clean technologies, renewable energy and low carbon economy, innovation and entrepreneurship, the premium food and wine, tourism, health and ageing, and education sectors as areas of potential growth (Government of South Australia, 2015a). As part of the reorientation away from local car manufacturing, the State Governments of South Australia and Victoria have worked with the Commonwealth to establish and implement the *Industry Growth Fund*. As part of this, \$155 million has been committed to the development of new industries in high growth sectors in South Australia. The State Government commitments

under the *Our Jobs Plan* are similarly intended to aid the transition away from local car manufacturing, with a commitment of \$60 million over four years towards fourteen actions to support displaced workers and their affected communities. There is a key focus on local employment strategies and investment to support industry and job growth.

In South Australia, DSD has established the *Automotive Transformation Taskforce* which provides services to help affected individuals and businesses to transition into the new economy.

In addition to these initiatives specifically designed to target key structural adjustments in South Australia, there are a range of further policy directions and initiatives at national and state level that are relevant to this discussion.

4.1 Commonwealth Government welfare reform

For the past decade successive federal governments have sought to increase the economic participation of people on income support payments, using a variety of means and with varying effect. In 2013, the Minister for Social Services commissioned a review of the welfare system with a view to encouraging greater participation in work for people receiving income support. The guiding principles for the review included providing incentives to work for those who are able to work and supporting social and economic participation through measures that build individual and family capability.

The resulting McClure report (McClure et al., 2015) identifies four pillars of reform. Pillar 1, *Simpler and Sustainable Income Support System*, focuses on a system that encourages and supports people to work to their capacity, is easier to access and understand, is delivered efficiently and effectively and identifies clear rewards for work. Pillar 2, *Strengthening Individual and Family Capability*, involves identifying and investing in the groups at greatest risk of remaining on income support long-term, and building a capacity for self-reliance. Pillar 3, *Engaging with Employers*, seeks to promote the benefits to business of employing a diverse and inclusive workforce, and to build on successful models and initiatives that involve close partnerships with industry, government, the community sector and prospective employees in order to achieve lasting employment outcomes. Pillar 4, *Building Community Capacity*, focuses on developing a functioning social support system where civil society, business and government - both individually and in partnership - play a role in improving employment and social outcomes for jobseekers and disadvantaged Australians.

Leading on from the McClure report, the Australian Government approach to welfare reform places a premium on identifying groups at high risk of long-term welfare dependency and providing an evidence base for investments that improve people's life chances and get people who are able to into work (Australian Government Department of Social Services, 2016). The current project focus responds directly to this imperative by targeting strategies to increase the participation of public housing tenants in economically valuable domains.

4.2 State policy context – Employment in the North

4.2.1 South Australian Strategic Plan

South Australia's Strategic Plan articulates the state's vision for what is needed to secure future prosperity and sustainability. It provides direction to the State Government, business and community organisations to identify and align their long-term visions with the Plan. The Plan is structured according to the following foundational priorities: Our Community, Our Prosperity, Our Environment, Our Health, Our Education, and Our Ideas. Each priority is organised into visions and goals based on community feedback, and has specific



and measurable targets. The Plan has played a central role in shaping seven strategic priorities and ten economic priorities for Government (Government of South Australia, n.d.-b).

A number of these priority areas link into the focus of this research. In particular, the focus on *growing prosperity* refers to the importance of ensuring that all South Australians have job opportunities. The Plan talks about *expanding opportunity by supporting disadvantaged people to engage in study, education and workforce development and training*, particularly through the provision of innovative, stable and affordable housing.

Targets specified in the Plan that have distinct relevance for this paper include:

- Target 16: *Economic Disadvantage*: By 2020 increase by 2 percent the share of total household income earned by low income south Australians (baseline 2007-08)
- Target 23: *Social Participation*: Increase the proportion of South Australian's participating in social, community and economic activities by 2020 (baseline 2011)
- Target 47: *Jobs*: Increase employment by 2% each year from 2010 to 2016 (baseline: 2010)
- Target 49: *Unemployment*: Maintain equal or lower unemployment than the Australian average through to 2020 (baseline 2004)
- Targets 48, 50, 51: *Ageing Workforce Participation, People with Disability, Aboriginal Unemployment*: Increase workforce participation/employment/decrease unemployment across this range of vulnerable groups (baseline 2010, 2009 & 2008 respectively).

4.2.2 The South Australian Government Economic Plan

The South Australian Government launched its Economic Plan in 2014 in response to local and global economic volatility and associated challenges posed to the state's traditional industries such as manufacturing and the resources sector. The Economic Plan is focused on the active pursuit of dynamic economic opportunities, with a view to growing new industries, jobs and financial prosperity for the state. The Economic Plan has a broad remit and calls for collective commitment and innovation, as indicated by the Premier in the Economic Statement 2015:

Transitioning to the new economy will need all South Australians to take action. From students enrolling in STEM subjects and entrepreneurs pursuing their ideas, to businesses adopting new ways of operating, and universities commercialising their research, the State needs a collective response to lift economic growth. As a government, we are creating the right environment to support growth and job creation (p.2).

The South Australian Economic Statement 2015 presented an updated list of ten economic priorities for the state, including –

- A new focus on the transition to a low carbon economy through growth in renewable energy and clean tech industries;
- The Food Park and Northern horticultural initiatives;
- Various stages of upgrading the North-South corridor;
- Expansion plans for the Adelaide Airport;
- Developing our disability services sector to capitalise on the opportunities from the NDIS;
- Future submarines and other defence procurements;
- Regional tourism infrastructure;
- The Festival Plaza redevelopment;
- Renewing our streets and suburbs;
- Commercialisation of research.

In order to truly succeed, the process will need to be about establishing partnerships and cooperation, and demonstrating value and rewards rather than through regulation.

One of the priority issues identified in South Australia's Economic Plan is economic and employment growth in Adelaide's North to mitigate the impact of the Holden factory closure in late 2017, delivered through the *Look North* Northern Economic Plan. The Plan lays out a dynamic blueprint for growing industries, empowering communities and creating jobs in the region.

4.2.3 Look North – Northern Economic Plan

The focus of the *Look North* Northern Economic Plan (Northern Economic Plan, n.d.) is on securing the prosperity of the region, particularly in light of structural change and associated challenges in the region. This Plan, driven by DSD, responds to the priorities contained in the Government's Economic Statement 2015 and to related strategies of partner local governments: Playford, Salisbury, and Port Adelaide Enfield. It focuses specifically on supporting growth industries and tapping into and developing what is a young and growing population. There is a concerted focus on collaborating and coordinating efforts across all sectors, in a clear, purposeful and determined way to make the changes needed.

Look North includes short to long-term projects, support to existing businesses, tapping into new markets, creating jobs, and training people to meet the skills needs of the region. There is also a key focus on addressing social issues in order to instil greater resilience and confidence in communities to help attune them to structural change and economic transition toward new opportunities in the region.

Every project supported by the Northern Economic Plan 'must have clearly identified economic and social outcomes or advantages' and a project leader to drive delivery and ensure outcomes are met.

Approved projects will have the benefit of a whole-of-government focus at both state and local levels. The aim is to help private sector proponents achieve job targets and smooth their pathway through council and state government approval processes. Government agencies will work together so that the planning and execution of these projects are truly integrated (p. 32)

The Look North has a three key strategic directions, all of which have points of intersection with the current Project.

Strategic Direction 1 – Industry Growth includes a construction and urban renewal component. Look North identifies there are more than 3000 construction-related small businesses in the region. While immediate major construction projects linked to Look North have the potential to generate more than 1500 new jobs over the next few years. The State Government is funding capital works to upgrade local schools and social housing. Specifically, Renewal SA projects include:

➤ 6000 homes to be built at Playford Alive, Blakes Crossing and Penfield;



- The Port Renewal project which involves a program of early activations and initiatives to revitalise Port Adelaide; and
- Ongoing regeneration of older housing areas and those co-located with town centres and public transport corridors.

Projects such as these create additional jobs and result in better living and learning conditions for local residents. There is considerable scope to extend the local resident focus from being at the receiving end of benefits, to taking a more active role in producing the benefits. This may include stipulating local residents have access to the new jobs created, or taking it one step further to ensure SAHT tenants have support to access some of the jobs. Look North also encourages construction companies to adopt innovative thinking and approaches, products and materials. A feasible extension of this would be to cultivate innovative hiring practices that address issues of local disadvantage by hiring local public housing tenants.

Strategic Direction 2 – Thriving Communities maintains a focus on investment in people, families and communities to ensure they have the skills and individual and collective resilience to participate effectively on the training to work continuum.

We are working together to better meet the needs of disadvantaged families and individuals. We know that building life skills to cope with adversity may often be as important as job skills. Projects for short term action are focused on early childhood programs in schools, developing life skills, positive education partnerships, and wellbeing and resilience programs. More targeted and integrated service delivery is also a key focus for partners (p. 7)

Thriving Communities seeks to raise career expectations at every step of the education ladder and equip people with skills to be workforce-ready, both of which are highly pertinent to encouraging greater workforce participation of SAHT tenants. While there is an explicit focus on transitioning the automotive workforce into new work opportunities, Strategic Direction 2 is sufficiently broad in recognising the need for community-wide engagement and preparation for workforce participation, particularly with respect to vulnerable groups:

Northern Adelaide has for a long time experienced higher than average levels of social and economic disadvantage. Some pockets of the population suffer high levels of joblessness and hardship and affected communities must be supported (p. 26).

Look North emphasises the importance of well-designed housing and public spaces to support Thriving Communities. The \$25 million allocated in 2015-16 budget to replace ageing SAHT properties in northern Adelaide combined with \$48 million being collectively spent by the three northern Councils to maintain and improve recreational spaces for local residents are designed to stimulate local jobs *and* improve quality of life in the region. There is an important opportunity for local people to play an active and integral role in improving the environment they live in. There are multi-level benefits insofar as jobs produce benefits for local economies and individual households, while neighbourhood improvements achieved in the process provide stronger community connections.

Strategic Direction 3 – Responsive Governments encourages governments at all levels to provide leadership for sustainable economic growth and community prosperity through –

- Reviewing relevant policies and exploring new options;
- Streamlining bureaucratic processes and removing business barriers;
- Coordinating community services.

This strategic direction encourages Innovation and creativity across all sectors of industry, with all levels of government encouraged to work together (thereby reducing duplication) and to

engage with small business to better understand and participate in growth opportunities, industries and markets. Types of activities include –

- Engaging with local businesses to further employment opportunities;
- Working with companies to foster innovation (which suggests possibilities to encourage innovation in hiring practices, e.g. hiring SAHT tenants);
- Developing initiatives such as business mentoring and coaching support etc.

Look North identifies a range of business growth opportunities in the region, including construction as a key sector with potential to grow significant numbers of jobs. Leveraging employment-related advantage for disadvantaged communities intersects with key elements of this Plan, particularly in terms of job promotion, community building, and supporting the disadvantaged by providing them with work training/skill development and getting them into jobs:

We need an ongoing, coordinated approach to promoting new and upcoming job opportunities, matching training to demand from specific industries, and involving disadvantaged members of the community in mainstream training and education (p. 57)

4.2.4 DCSI Thriving Communities – Together SA – Together in the North

DCSI has a dedicated *Thriving Communities* service area within its range of community services. Thriving Communities is dedicated to creating the conditions whereby ‘all South Australians can actively contribute to building the social and economic wellbeing of their communities’. It involves a concerted effort to build opportunities for communities, recognising the social, environmental and economic factors that *limit opportunities for some people in particular*.

Thriving Communities follows a collective impact approach in bringing community, government, not-for-profit organisations, business and philanthropy together within a particular locality. It seeks to develop a network of communication, collaboration and commitment targeting large-scale, lasting change (Department for Communities and Social Inclusion, n.d.-b):

Collective impact uses a range of solutions, including programs, services and policy and system change, to work towards outcomes that reflect the community's priorities and needs. Progress towards these outcomes is measured and solutions adapted to maintain improvement and reflect new learning and partnerships.

Community is central to collective impact, which aims to integrate effort and make the most of local strengths, skills, knowledge and resources.

Together SA is a non-government organisation established with the support of Founding Partners, in particular Community Centres SA. The role of the organisation is to support local collective impact initiatives designed to build leadership, plan action and to rigorously measure outcomes relating to the issues of most concern locally. *Together SA* was invited, via the DCSI Thriving Communities program, to lead a collective impact initiative in the North known as *Together in the North*.

Together in the North involves bringing together the local community, service providers, industry representatives and stakeholders to produce policy, systems and service change for the wellbeing of children and young people in the northern suburbs. To date sixteen service providers along with two local residents have assumed roles in the leadership group in the early stages of this initiative.

Together in the North is resourced (some in-kind) through the following means –

- Department for Education and Child Development (DECD) funding to kick start the initiative;



- Contributions of Together SA members;
- South Australian Government;
- City of Playford;
- Community organisations, volunteers, and students.

There is potential to evolve a collective impact initiative along the lines of Together in the North in pursuing employment opportunities for highly disadvantaged groups in the North, using SAHT tenants as a case in point.

4.2.5 Northern Connections

Northern Connections was formed in 2009 by the State Government to improve the economic and social outcomes of Northern Adelaide (local government areas of Salisbury, Playford, Port Adelaide Enfield, Gawler and Light). The agency sits within DCSI and works to connect top to bottom government, form strong regional partnerships and deliver joined-up approaches to regional issues. It is also tasked with connecting up various programs targeted to the North and coordinating services that need to be working together – ‘getting the right people around the right table, at the right time’ (Department for Communities and Social Inclusion, n.d.-a). Importantly, Northern Connections advocates for the needs of northern Adelaide and seeks to ensure that *local people benefit from available opportunities*.

In response to Look North, Northern Connections is focusing attention on Strategic Direction 2 – Thriving Communities. As part of DCSI, Northern Connections has a strategic interest in addressing the ‘deep and persistent disadvantage’ in the North by building community capacity and strength. Northern Connections is well placed to draw on DCSI’s range of programs, knowledge and resources to develop opportunities in the region. These include:

- Thriving Communities – Together in the North and Northern Economic Plan
- Beyond Auto One-Stop-Shop and Outreach Program
- Northern Adelaide Positive Education Network
- Learning To Work – WorkConnectED
- Wellbeing and Resilience (Schools, Automotive workers, Families).

4.2.6 Northern Futures

Northern Futures is a community based not for profit organisation with connections to local community, industry, and business. The organisation fosters collaborative partnerships between the education, industry, business, employment, training and community sectors for the benefit of the people in the northern Adelaide region, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds. It also provides strategic leadership in the development and implementation of vocational and enterprise education, skills formation, employment and social inclusion in northern Adelaide.

A key role of the organisation is to develop and progress State and Federal programs to advance education, training and workforce development in the northern region. It provides a central point for accessing information, advice, referral, support and services to enhance workforce and skill development. Northern Futures services focus on:

- Workforce development;
- Employment programs;
- Career Development.

Career Workforce Development Centres (CWDC) have been established to assist people in the region to identify and enhance their skills, strengths and experiences and to develop a SMART Career Plan to achieve their employment and career goals.

Northern Futures services, particularly the CWDCs, have significant potential to support the engagement of SAHT tenants in targeted employment programs.

5 SA Policy Context – Directions in Housing Policy

5.1 SA Housing Strategy

The South Australian Government has outlined Seven Strategic Priorities for the state, one of which is ensuring housing affordability for all South Australians. The *Housing Strategy for South Australia 2013-18* responds directly to this Strategic Priority by focusing on increasing the supply and diversity of housing, and creating a housing and homelessness system that supports and sustains people, especially the most disadvantaged, in safe, affordable and stable housing.

The Housing Strategy links up with the broader social and economic agenda of government, by giving a commitment to ‘build[ing] a system that ensures all South Australians have the opportunities to realise their housing aspirations, serviced by an industry that remains a vital part of a strong economy’ (Government of South Australia, p. 4). The Housing Strategy taps into the state priorities of building stronger communities and driving economic opportunities, insofar as -

- Having an affordable home, with access to services and supports people need, helps to build stronger communities (and supports employment outcomes); and
- Achieving affordable housing targets involves construction of new homes, which is an important economic driver for the state.

A specific call to action in the Housing Strategy stipulates that “where direct government investment is needed, it is prioritised to those most vulnerable in our communities and delivered in a way that provides assistance to achieve higher levels of social and economic participation” (Government of South Australia, p. 6). On a prima facie level this can be interpreted as providing people with a stable base which is key to economic participation. On a more innovative level, there is scope to explore how the delivery of affordable housing can in and of itself incorporate social and economic opportunities for local communities in real and practical terms, by involving local disadvantaged people directly in the construction and maintenance of housing.

The Housing Strategy attributes to Government a role in partnering with the community and private sectors to deliver innovative ways to support low income South Australians. *Common Ground Adelaide* is an example of this type of project, whereby safe, stable and affordable housing is provided to the most disadvantaged people in the community. The apartment-based design includes spaces for community development, living skills and training activities, office areas for support staff and health spaces for dental and other clinical services. Tenants are provided with life opportunities through links with the arts, education, sport, health and social services. Building on this support base, tenants developing new skills and confidence to make independent and socially connected lives (Common Ground, n.d.). While this housing-based wrap-around services model applies to accommodation, it is also the type of model that could be extended to cover an employment focus for people with disadvantage.

The SA Housing Strategy 2013-18 includes a number of planned actions that intersect with elements of the current project:

- Incorporate innovative housing requirements into government tenders and facilitate partnerships between private and community housing providers including Bowden and inner-city renewal sites;



- Promote and support local construction and related workforce training to build capacity in the construction sector in sustainable and innovative design, including through the Construction Industry Training Board. The Playford Alive and Bowden projects which have generated employment and training opportunities in the region.

The Housing Strategy has a consistent focus on community involvement that opens up scope to involve local residents in innovative ways. The Strategy highlights that the needs and aspirations of all members of the community should shape renewal projects and reinforces the need for an ongoing commitment to community initiatives and development activities. Social procurement can respond to this by taking the focus beyond creating an urban form that encourages and stimulates employment, to building employment opportunities directly into construction and maintenance processes.

According to the Housing Strategy, South Australia's Planning Strategy projects a requirement for at least 38,700 additional affordable homes in greater Adelaide and 7,000 new affordable homes in non-metropolitan areas over 30 years. Most new home construction will fall within existing urban areas. This suggests major scope for generating employment opportunities for local disadvantaged residents.

A number of key changes in policy and practice were flagged in the SA Housing Strategy 2013-18. Of interest for this research were changes in the roles and functions of Housing SA and Renewal SA.

5.2 Housing SA Blueprint

Housing SA has undergone major organisational change in recent times. To provide some historical context, the SAHT was originally tasked with providing affordable rental properties through large scale developments, to the extent that by 1986 the SAHT had been involved in the construction of more than 100,000 homes targeted to people of low income. The 1990s heralded a shift away from the low income focus to providing housing to people of heightened vulnerability who were at greatest risk of exclusion from home ownership and the private rental market. The national funding agreement was changed to give priority access to people in greatest need of social housing. Housing SA was established as a public housing authority in 2006, to administer services on behalf of the SAHT.

As flagged in the SA Housing Strategy 2013-18, key reforms have resulted in recent changes to the role and core business of Housing SA. Principle among these, Housing SA has been moved into DCSI, which has involved a heightened focus on the values and priorities of the Department. With the transfer of asset strategy and public housing functions to Renewal SA, Housing SA has shifted away from direct service provision and tenancy management (a traditional landlord's role) to assuming the role of funder and facilitator of programs, housing assessment, management and support:

Housing SA is now a systems' coordinator, funder, provider and partner within a multi-provider service system. As an organisation and as part of DCSI it plays a significant role in addressing State Government strategic priorities and has a clear mandate to work towards the promotion of independence and participation, the creation of stronger communities, and the provision of the best possible services to those who are most disadvantaged in our community. (Government of South Australia, n.d.-a, p. 5)

Housing SA now sees itself as a key component of an integrated housing and homelessness system. It continues to provide services to the SAHT, primarily in the form of partnering with multiple agencies and non-government providers to facilitate and coordinate –

Renewal SA has estimated that the *Renewing Our Streets and Suburbs Program* will generate more than \$1.2 billion of private and government investment, supporting around 1600 jobs each year for the next five years

- Housing provision across the domains of *public housing* - property and tenancy management; *community housing* – funding, support for NGOs; *Regional/remote Aboriginal housing* – housing infrastructure, economic development);
- Services for people encompassing homelessness support, private rental, access system; and
- Supporting systems across a range of business areas (policy/strategy/funding, regulation and governance).

In October 2013, a new multi-trade maintenance contracting model was implemented within Housing SA to provide more efficient maintenance services to public housing tenants across the state. This innovative program has established ‘head contractors’ in regions across the state to take responsibility for a range of maintenance services (SAHT Annual Report 2013-14).

5.3 Renewal SA

The Urban Renewal Authority, which operates under the name of *Renewal SA*, was created in 2012 to “unlock the exciting potential of existing urban areas, through partnerships and consultation with community, industry and all levels of government, which will enhance South Australia’s economic and social prosperity” (Government of South Australia, 2015b, p. 5). The role of Renewal SA is to target well-planned urban renewal projects, increase delivery of affordable housing, stimulate innovation in projects and policy, facilitate demonstration projects and partnerships and master plan key locations, enable delivery of urban renewal by private and community housing providers, and in some cases directly deliver projects.

While Renewal SA is maintaining its focus on responding to community needs by developing accessible, connected places where people want to live, it is also increasing its focus on facilitating private and not-for-profit sector partnerships to accelerate urban renewal:

Renewal SA is transforming into a more transactionally-focused organisation which encourages greater private and not-for-profit housing sector involvement. Through its activities, Renewal SA is establishing its position as a key economic driver for South Australia, generating jobs and investment by working across multiple markets to de-risk projects (Government of South Australia, 2015b, p. 9)

Since December 2014, Renewal SA has been the single agency responsible for renewing the suburbs built by the SAHT. At this time the management of all SAHT assets was transferred to Renewal SA as part of the State Government’s reform process. Renewal SA has a longer term 15-year strategy to renew up to 40,000 SAHT dwellings. The program of renewal will range from renovations to complete redevelopments and/or the



transfer of tenant and property management to community housing providers.

Renewal SA has estimated that the *Renewing Our Streets and Suburbs Program* will generate more than \$1.2 billion of private and government investment, supporting around 1600 jobs each year for the next five years. Specific initiatives include (Renewal SA, n.d.-d):

- **Better Neighbourhoods Program:** demolition, land division, construction in areas with high concentrations of aged social housing. Involves housing and construction industry, civil works and building contractors as consultants;
- **Small scale urban renewal:** private and not-for-profit for groups of 30-60 housing trust houses;
- **Small cluster renewals:** sale of small clusters of double-unit and detached social housing for renewal by private developers and not for profit housing providers, including the demolition, refurbishment and sale of properties;
- **Medium scale urban renewal:** Private and not for profit renewal of social housing sites with the potential for increased density, affordability and housing mix, typically with 100-150 houses;
- **Medium density site renewals:** Private and not for profit renewal of SAHT 'walk up flats' and cottage home sites as medium density mixed tenure developments in close proximity to transport, other services and employment centres.
- **Stock Transfers:** Tenancy and property management transfer from SAHT to community housing providers.

The *1000 Homes in 1000 Days Program* is part of the *Renewing Our Streets and Suburbs Program*. The SA Government committed \$208 million over three years in the 2014-15 Budget to build the homes, generating around 900 new employment opportunities for South Australians in the process. Renewal SA identified improving outcomes for SAHT tenants as a major driver for the project, mainly in terms of supplying new housing in areas where tenants want to live. Social procurement could add further potential to deepen positive outcomes for tenants, by involving them wherever possible in the construction process (Renewal SA, n.d.-a).

Part of Renewal SA's Works Program, Playford Alive is described as one of the largest urban renewal projects in Australia. It involves a partnership between Renewal SA, DCSI, Housing SA, the City of Playford and the local community. With a timeframe spanning 2008 to 2025, and with a total project value of \$1 billion (\$315 million invested by Renewal SA), Playford Alive involves major investment across a range of infrastructure and renewal projects and greenfield development in the North, including the renovation and construction of numerous public housing dwellings (Renewal SA, n.d.-b). Further information about the social procurement role of this program is provided in Section 6.1.

6 The role of social procurement in supporting local employment objectives

Modern social procurement processes are designed to maximise government objectives by purchasing goods and services from external parties through a robust, transparent, well planned and managed approach. By incorporating social objectives into the procurement process, governments can create demand for high quality goods and services and infrastructure while simultaneously securing significant community benefits. Well targeted public procurement can stimulate local economies by sourcing local goods and services, which in turn contributes to local jobs and wages, supports local supply chains and retains profits within local communities (Civic Economics, 2007). Social procurement processes also have the capacity to target local

By incorporating social objectives into the procurement process, governments can create demand for high quality goods and services and infrastructure while simultaneously securing significant community benefits.

employment ratios, and in this way can address entrenched unemployment in disadvantaged areas (State Government of Victoria, 2010).

6.1 Social procurement in South Australia

The South Australian Office of the Industry Advocate (OIA) is “tasked with improving the economic benefit to the state by increasing the number of State Government contracts being awarded to local businesses” (Office of the Industry Advocate, n.d.). The OIA has endorsed nine principles to ensure maximum local participation that require the procuring agencies to factor economic benefit to the state in assessing bid evaluations. For example, *Principle 8: Potential for local industry development & employment creation through government buying is explored at the project design or concept stage* seeks to ensure that –

- Local industry and workforce development is considered as part of the project planning or concept stage;
- Agencies consult with OIA in early planning discussions on significant procurements to identify and scope opportunities for local participation;
- For larger projects where principal contractors are largely responsible for subcontracting arrangements that may impact on local participation, it is proposed that regular meetings between the principle contractor and the OIA are built in to the contractual arrangements.

Through the Office of the Industry Advocate, the South Australian Government commissioned Deloitte Access Economics (2014) to undertake an economic contribution study of procurement in South Australia with a view to developing a weighting methodology (a framework of questions that can be asked of tenderers about broader factors) designed to maximise the economic benefits associated with public procurement spending. A key finding of the report was that *employment* and *investment* and the *use of local suppliers* both in direct employment and through sub-contractors were key to promoting local economic development. Beyond these quantifiable economic drivers, the report also identified that South Australian Government procurement spending contributes to broader economic benefits, including progressing a range of socio-economic objectives such as addressing disadvantage.

Under the Industry Advocate Bill 2017 (draft for comment), the South Australian Industry Participation Policy (SAIPP) is being revised to incorporate a range of strategic procurement policies into a single, comprehensive framework. The terms of the revised SAIPP seek to promote government expenditure that results in economic development for South Australia, provide value for money, support strategically important industries and give capable businesses based in South



Australia a full, fair and reasonable opportunity to tender and participate in government contracts. The SAIPP specifies that for all expenditure over \$33,000, the government must determine if there is a business in the state or the region that can deliver the product or service. A minimum of one South Australian business is required to quote for work. The SAIPP applies to State Government procurement of goods and services including infrastructure and construction; Public Private Partnership projects; and federally-funded infrastructure and construction projects managed by the State Government private sector projects receiving State Government support of more than \$2.5 million cash and in-kind. The IPP applies to all procurements and extends to subcontractor and supplier activity (Office of the Industry Advocate, 2016).

Benefits Realisation and Reporting Guidelines are being developed to monitor how the SAIPP is performing against a proposed Industry Participation Framework. Importantly, this includes monitoring performance in relation to expanded economic development, including economic participation for disadvantaged and socially excluded groups (Office of the Industry Advocate, 2017b).

A priority for the Government of South Australia is to grow the economy, create jobs and support the diversification of South Australia's industry sectors. Industry participation from procurement can play a significant role. It is particularly important where the contracted activity is based in an area or sector of the economy which presents an opportunity to address high unemployment or social disadvantage, or in areas of high value - add activity (Office of the Industry Advocate, 2017a, p. 8)

At a regional level, the South Australian State and Local Government Capital Expenditure and Procurement Project commenced in May 2016 to factor in local employment outcomes when allocating tenders for the Northern Connector and other key State Government-funded projects across northern Adelaide, and to develop a local procurement policy for the collective capital expenditure budgets of the Salisbury, Playford and Port Adelaide Enfield councils. Local projects include upgrades to schools, children's centres and public housing, as well as \$55 million over three years to build a new Gawler East Collector Link Road (Look North, n.d.).

Public procurement opportunities identified in relation to Northern Adelaide include -

- Identifying ways to better connect young people to jobs;
- In conjunction with local government, establishing a series of 'Meet the Buyer' events and 'Supplying to Government' workshops, specifically focused on northern Adelaide projects (these can emphasize the message to construction companies about the potential to, and value of, employing local public housing tenants as an extension of local employment):

There are opportunities for people to gain work and local businesses to win work from the substantial amount spent by state and local governments as they invest in the community. Public procurement is a very effective way for governments to support local industry development, innovation and the long-term health of the regional economy (Northern Economic Plan, n.d., p. 57)

Renewal SA Works Program – Playford Alive

One of the key objectives of the Playford Alive program has been to ensure local people prosper from the economic development and economic growth provided by Playford Alive. Renewal SA has taken a deliberated approach to opening new avenues of opportunity for local residents:

A key focus of any urban regeneration program is the creation of economic opportunities for the local population through employment, training and education which is often achieved by attracting new business to an area. Whilst Playford Alive will undoubtedly attract private business to the area it was also felt that the building and infrastructure capital works program itself could also offer local

people an opportunity to gain work experience, training and employment as well as being part of the regeneration of their own community. (Perrett & Spoehr, 2014, p. 2)

The Playford Alive approach has set up a demand driven employment and training strategy linked to infrastructure and building contracts which are part of the Playford Alive regeneration program. Under the Renewal SA Works Program, private contractors and service providers are required to deliver either work experience and longer term placements or training to a number of local unemployed people as a condition of being awarded the contract (Perrett & Spoehr, 2014). Program activities include providing training and hands-on work experience in civil construction, building and construction, horticulture, retail, child care and aged care, giving participants the opportunity to work in real industry environments within their communities.

The Program has delivered vital social and economic outcomes for the region. These include (Renewal SA, n.d.-c):

- **Employment and work experience opportunities in Renewal SA managed contracts** – Work experience can include general labour, traineeships, apprenticeships and/or semi-skilled work.
- **Engagement, training and employment programs** – Partnering with registered training organisations (RTOs) and agencies to deliver the initiatives that prepare people for opportunities available through local economic activity.
- **Live training sites using Renewal SA owned land to provide local on-site training for RTOs** – These “outdoor classrooms” are designed to produce candidates with experience working on infrastructure projects.

A review of Renewal SA's Works Program at Playford Alive showed that from Playford Alive's inception in 2008 to March 2014, over 1300 local people had undertaken pre-employment training (Perrett & Spoehr, 2014). A further 650 local people had undertaken 'live training', of which 85% gained the respective formal qualification, and over 200 local people had undertaken a work experience placement resulting directly in around 110 new jobs across a wide range of industries (Perrett & Spoehr, 2014).

The review also provided insights into the successful methodology employed by the Program. The three stream approach incorporating classroom based training programs, live training sites and work experience and longer term job placements as a contractual condition of tendering for Renewal SA contracts, acknowledged that different people with different needs require different routes into employment. By recruiting through multiple entry points (both private sector and public institutions), the Program achieved success in creating community awareness of the Program. Notably, Perrett & Spoehr (2014, p. 23) also reported key support for the program among the businesses involved:

Renewal SA and the city of Playford reported little ideological objections to 'government interference in business decisions. On the contrary, they suggest that contractors appear to have embraced the program and that many reported that they 'needed to fill such vacancies anyway' and therefore the program had acted as an effective screening device of potential employees. Others agreed with the principle of employing locally and wanted to be seen to be 'giving back' to the local community.

6.2 Social procurement in NSW

NSW government agencies have embarked on a range of initiatives to use procurement budgets to deliver social value into local communities. There is a concerted push to encourage public sector organisations to increase their expenditure with social benefit suppliers who provide jobs and training across the state (Newman & Burkett, 2012, p. 7)



Procurement practices in NSW, as elsewhere in Australia, have developed from a position of being an administrative and transactional function within the public sector, to being recognised as highly strategic and core to ensuring that government objectives are being achieved. In recognition of this, key programs are now underway in NSW to support the development of strategic procurement capability in State and Local Government.

A more strategic approach to purchasing and procurement interlinks with and underpins an engagement with social procurement, as the generation of social value increasingly becomes a strategic matter for public sector organisations. This in turn has been driven by both internal government agendas and objectives, and by external business and consumer concerns.

Housing NSW spends around \$270 million each year on public housing property maintenance contracts (around 600,000 work orders). Reflecting their government's commitment to integrating social value clauses into large contracts where clear benefits accrue to social policy objectives, Housing NSW has specific and mandatory (legislated) social obligations related to public housing estates, particularly in relation to tenant employment. Contracts clearly set out what employment targets are expected and how they will be monitored over the life of the contract. Partnerships are fostered between contractors and social enterprises; for example between Job Quest and Transfield, which was awarded a contract by Housing NSW for property maintenance in the Newcastle and Lake Macquarie area. Table 2 provides an indication of how the related legislation and policy is framed.

Table 2 MRP08 Legislative and Policy Conditions of Housing NSW for contracts focused on Housing Estate Property Maintenance

Example of HNSW Social Objective	How objective is reflected in Property Maintenance Contract Obligations	Benefits to HNSW and constituents
Improved economic and social participation	Tenant employment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy statement about the Principal's commitment to reducing social and economic disadvantage in communities with large numbers of social housing tenants Creating employment opportunities through various activities, including generating a small number of direct tenant employment opportunities linked to contracts for maintenance work on properties of the Principal. Tenant Employment Framework, including specific tenant employment requirements 	Cost savings Social benefits Improved health, education and skills outcomes, employability, income
Participate in initiatives related to addressing education and employment outcomes for the disadvantaged	Community contracts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contracts to perform maintenance work which the Principal selectively tenders to Job Network Agencies, non-profit organisations. These agencies then employ unemployed residents of public housing under appropriate supervision. 	Training and transitional employment for at-risk individuals
Improved social and physical amenity in estates	Handyperson Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At request of Principal, tenant handyperson carries out minor maintenance and repair jobs on a rapid turnaround basis (engaged under a separate contract). 	Tenants are trained and employed Helps with the look and feel of public housing areas Helps to protect HNSW assets

6.3 Social procurement in Victorian local government

Victorian Local Government Council Plans define their strategic objectives according to the triple bottom line of economic, environmental and social outcomes. Increasingly, Councils are recognising the role of procurement in delivering these outcomes; this is well established in the areas of economic and environmental management, but gaining increasing traction in relation to social objectives

Increasingly, Victorian councils are examining how their procurement processes can be applied strategically to address particular issues in their communities and have already engaged in some of the most innovative community initiatives in Australia. Many of these have involved exploring how their purchasing power and local resources can be used to create positive changes in local communities and save money in the long term...

Councils that have already begun changing their procurement practices may find building social impacts into their procurement approaches a natural extension of their current activity. (State Government of Victoria, 2010, p. 9).

A number of Victorian Councils have extended their social procurement focus to incorporate a direct employment focus. This has involved Council employing long-term unemployed people, typically in partnership with external organisations (not-for-profits) that are involved in identifying and supporting the employment process.

A relevant case study is the Public Tenant Employment Program (PTEP) (State Government of Victoria, 2010). The Victorian Department of Human Services (DHS) has included social clauses in contracts to deliver positive social impacts to the community. Accordingly, the DHS Housing Division adds social clauses into many contracts, including a stipulation that contractors must employ a certain number of public housing tenants (variable according to the size of the contract) as a key contractual deliverable. The type of contracts involved range from basic services such as cleaning, landscaping and security, to more complex services such as construction services.

The Public Tenant Employment Program (PTEP) is a Victorian government funded initiative. The Program assists contractors to comply with the social clauses in their contracts by providing recruitment services, including sourcing tenant recruits, and ensuring that all the relevant checks and qualifying certifications have been undertaken. Project benefits include providing public housing tenants with a pathway out of poverty, lowering turnover of tenants by virtue of stable employment, and providing tenants with a raft of new opportunities. In the five years to 2013, PTEP led to almost 650 jobs and over 1300 training opportunities for public housing tenants.

7 Strategic implications for DCSI and SAHT

Public procurement can play a key role in advancing social and economic objectives. Public investment in housing and urban development can be leveraged to foster innovation and generate local employment and training opportunities for people experiencing disadvantage and unemployment. To ensure that people who have experienced disadvantage are able to take advantage of opportunities to enter (or re-enter) the workforce it is important they are provided appropriate individualised support. This should acknowledge the 'cost' of working (particularly in casual roles) which may impact the new worker in unanticipated ways. Costs may include childcare or out of school care⁴, transport (public transport or petrol) and uniforms. In addition, new wages are likely to increase the cost of their housing and reduce their existing income. For someone entering the casual workforce with an intermittent new income source this can be difficult to effectively manage both at an administrative and financial level.

⁴ Noting that to access childcare, people are often required to commit to specified days each week which must be paid even if they are not used, for casual on-call workers this is not possible or practical.



It is critical to maintain support and motivation for people with complex needs who have been absent from the workforce for an extended time. In addition to providing social procurement and participation opportunities, Government has a role in continuing to support new workers during the transition period as they learn to manage the challenges associated with working. For example, a holistic person-centred case management approach⁵ should continue to be available for up to 26 weeks⁶ after the person enters the workforce for those who access the South Australian Participation Initiative. This approach will ensure best practice support across the duration of the critical timeframe necessary to achieve sustainable outcomes.

Lessons can be learnt from various employment programs including the Housing SA-ART Employment Garden Blitz project and Victorian Public Tenant Employment Program, that have used wrap-around approaches to supporting personal development, workforce readiness and skills training and supported and coordinated pathways into employment for more complex, disadvantaged members of the community. The Renewal SA Works Program at Playford Alive has also successfully used procurement to support local employment opportunities. By building on these initiatives, Housing SA has scope to advance many of the policy priorities articulated here.

It is also evident that industries such as the Health Care and Social Assistance and the Accommodation and Food Services industries present considerable scope for building additional employment opportunities for SAHT tenants in growth industries in Adelaide's North. The Housing SA participation model, if shown to be effective, may provide a solid foundation for engaging other industries and businesses to participate in a similar training and employment program, underpinned by social procurement processes.

There is a need to develop a more robust evidence base on the strengths and weaknesses of various initiatives designed to generate quality employment and training outcomes for public housing tenants from public procurement of social housing and related services. The Housing SA Participation Initiative design includes a thorough evaluation component that fills a critical gap in this respect. The ability to demonstrate a compelling case in terms of positive employment outcomes, industry outcomes and social outcomes by brokering government, industry and service partnerships to support tenant employment opportunities has the potential to lay the groundwork for a more comprehensive roll-out of this model.

In targeting SAHT tenants for a program designed to increase participation outcomes in volunteering, learning and earning activities, Housing SA responds to wider policies targeting reduced unemployment, building stronger, more resilient communities, and developing confidence and job-readiness among a population group with otherwise low employment prospects.

⁵ A holistic person-centred case management approach is often recommended for people with complex needs (e.g. disabilities, drug and alcohol services, injured workers). It includes a strength based approach, one that supports client self-determination and planning with collaboration between case manager and client as a central feature.

⁶ Interim payments are provided to Job Network providers once a job-seeker has achieved 13 weeks, with a final payment paid for employment maintained at 26 weeks (DEEWR, 2013).

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